

OM 034-2002 (5800) INMATE CERTIFIED MAIL PROCEDURES



Operations Memorandum

NUMBER: 034-2002 (5800)
DATE: 10/24/2002
SUBJECT: Inmate Certified Mail
Procedures

EXPIRATION DATE: 10/24/2003

1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** To improve documentation and delivery of certified mail by:

- ! establishing the certified mail information to be recorded,
- ! increasing the retention period for certified mail records, and
- ! emphasizing the importance of maintaining procedures for documenting the delivery and forwarding of certified mail for inmates.

Judicial and legal notices are routinely sent to inmates by certified mail. Examples include asset forfeiture notices, court orders, subpoenas, and other types of legal material. The Bureau is responsible for delivering these items to inmates, therefore delivery procedures must be established to provide evidence of delivery.

Recent court decisions and federal agency initiatives have indicated a need for the Bureau to strengthen its procedures for documenting and preserving evidence of certified mail delivery to inmates.

2. **DIRECTIVE REFERENCED**

PS 5800.10 Mail Management Manual (11/3/95)

3. **INCOMING INMATE CERTIFIED MAIL.** Mail room staff at each institution are to maintain a certified mail log to document all incoming inmate certified mail. At a minimum, each log is to include the following information:

- ! Date Certified Mail is Received
- ! Certified Mail Number
- ! Inmate's Name and Register Number
- ! Inmate's Location (e.g., Housing Unit)
- ! Sender's Name and Return Address
- ! Date Delivered to Unit Staff or Inmate
- ! Signature of Inmate or if Inmate Refused to Sign
- ! Signature of Unit Staff Receiving Certified Mail, if applicable

At institutions where Unit Staff sign for all certified mail, Unit Staff must maintain a certified mail log to document, at a minimum, the following information:

- ! Date Certified Mail is Received
- ! Certified Mail Number
- ! Inmate's Name and Register Number
- ! Inmate's Location (e.g., Housing Unit)
- ! Sender's Name and Return Address
- ! Date Delivered to Inmate
- ! Signature of Inmate or if Inmate Refused to Sign
- ! Signature of Unit Staff Delivering Mail to Inmate

In both instances, the Inmate Systems Manager (ISM) is to establish a standard log to record the required information.

4. FORWARDING OR RETURNING INMATE CERTIFIED MAIL. Certified mail addressed to an inmate who is not at the institution is to be forwarded or returned to the sender if a forwarding address is not available. The certified mail will be placed in an institution envelope and re-certified. An entry will be made in the mail room's incoming inmate certified mail log book indicating:

- ! the inmate's name,
- ! new certified number, and
- ! address to which mail was forwarded.

When the letter is received at the new institution, the procedures outlined in Section 3 will be followed.

5. RETIREMENT OF CERTIFIED MAIL LOGS TO THE FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER (FRC). The ISM is to advise Unit Staff to forward their certified mail logs to him or her for processing to the FRC. This is usually done when the mail room log is full. Unit Staff logs are to be combined with the mail room logs prior to retirement. Staff instructions and records management guidance are located on the Bureau of Prisons intranet on-line services system in bopdocs.bop.gov.

6. ASSISTANCE. Questions concerning these procedures may be

referred to the Central Office, ISM Branch at FTS (700) 367-3050
or (202) 307-3050.

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